half. Yang Tseng-hsin's attempted reform of this *corvée* was ineffective; the practice and the abuses continued.

In the same year Yang embarked on another reform, reducing the rate of interest on loans of grain from the public granaries. The management of granaries in many districts was corrupt. When the official authorized the issue of grain, eight *tou* (about ten pounds) would be entered on the slip as ten *tou;* but when he collected grain in repayment, only ten *tou* would be counted for every twelve *tou* weighed in. Thus what was originally intended as a measure of social welfare and economic stabilization was made to serve the collection of interest at a rate of 50 per cent. To prevent the practice of this form of usury by bureaucrats, Yang ordered the enforcement of standard measurements and the limitation of interest to a standard 10 per cent.

Bureaucrats also engaged in usury by lending to moneylenders. In the Tarim Basin, especially, pawnshops were managed by merchants of several nationalities: Chinese, Uighurs, Indians claiming the protection of the British Consulate General at Kashgar, Tatars who formerly held Tsarist Russian passports, and Tungans or Chinese-speaking Moslems. The rates of interest traditionally charged were 7, 8, and even 10 per cent per month. At the same time there existed government money bureaus which were supposed to charge only 1 per cent per month. Under these conditions, officials found it easy to make low-interest loans not to the poor, but to prosperous and solvent merchants who reloaned the money to pawnbrokers, at not less than 2 per cent per month, who in turn made loans to the poor at much higher rates. In this way the high interest paid by the poorest people paid a profit to the pawnbroker, to the merchant backing the pawnbroker, and to the official who authorized the loan of public money to the merchant. The abuses inherent in the system were made worse by the fact that all too often the rich merchant was the local Beg or District Elder, who could use his official authority, backed by the higher authority of the Chinese magistrate, to enforce the collection of principal and interest. In 1922 Yang Tseng-hsin attempted to end these abuses, first by forbidding the combination of private

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loans and the lending of public money, and then by ordering the complete withholding of government loans.[20]

More effective, because more easy to carry out, was Yang's policy of regulating trade balances. He required merchants to limit imports to values which would not exceed the value of exports. The object of this policy was both to prevent the draining of wealth from the province and to prevent Uighur merchants from banking their accumulated wealth in Russia (before the Russian Revolution), and also to stop Chinese merchants from holding their wealth in provinces other than Sinkiang. He himself, however, through Chinese merchants acting as his agents, sold Sinkiang exports, principally in Tientsin, and then banked the proceeds not in China but under the American flag in the Philippines.

During Yang Tseng-hsin's rule Sinkiang was forced to change its fiscal basis completely. Before the Revolution, the province had been heavily subsidized by the Imperial treasury. The annual subsidy was at one time as high as 2,920,000 taels; then it fell to 2,600,000 taels, and by the time of the Republic the poverty of the Central Government cut off the subsidy altogether. Yang Tseng-hsin then issued his own provincial paper currency to a face value of about 10,000,000 taels.[21] This measure inevitably caused an inflation and considerable hardship.

Eventually, no less than four paper currencies were established in the same province. The Urumchi, Turfan, Ili, and Kashgar regions each had its own currency, and each currency exchanged against the others at different rates. Each paper currency, carrying values not in dollars but in taels, had a subsidiary copper coinage. Only in the Kashgar region, with its two-way trade with both India and Russian Turkistan, was there a certain amount of silver backing, with silver coins in circulation in addition to paper.

[20] For these reforms or attempted reforms, see Tseng Wen-wu, *op. cit.*, pp. 595–596.

[21] Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsinchiang Chin-Yin Lun*, Nanking, 1936 (reprinted Chungking, 1939), p. 45 (in Chinese).

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The maintenance of different exchange rates in different parts of the province enabled the Governor to keep a political check on remittances. The undue concentration of money in any one part of the province, possibly indicating preparations for a political move of some kind, would be detectable through the resulting pressure on exchange rates.

Until the Russian Revolution, Tsarist Russia had by treaty the right to maintain branches of the Russo-Asiatic bank at Urumchi, Ili, Chuguchak, and Kashgar. (After the Russian Revolution, these branches continued to operate for some years under French protection.) Like other foreign banks in China, the Russo-Asiatic bank had the right to issue its own paper currency. In 1916, under the stress of war financing in Russia, it suddenly increased its note circulation in Sinkiang from one million to five million rubles.[22] Then, when the Russian ruble fell, it dragged the Sinkiang tael with it, thus aggravating the inflation in Sinkiang. In that year the total provincial revenue was a little over 5,200,000 taels and the budget deficit amounted to more than 700,000 taels. The most important source of revenue was the tax on cultivated land, which then totaled 10,500,000 *mu*.[23] The gold mined in Sinkiang in that year, under government license or monopoly, was worth less than 5000 taels.

The Provincial Government at this period had no money for irrigation schemes which might have opened large areas for cultivation. Poor finance and inflation not only hindered economic improvement through public works but intensified corruption among officials. While in all fairness it must be repeated that Yang Tseng-hsin was both an honest and a competent official by old mandarin standards, it must also be admitted that economic and political conditions toward the end of his rule were shrewdly summed up by the Swiss traveler Bosshard:

[22] *Hsi Pei Yen Chiu* (*Northwest Research*), Peiping, 1932, Vol. 6, issue of April 15, pp. 55 and 129 (in Chinese).

[23] The *mu*, a traditional land measure, varies from place to place. Six *mu* to the acre is often taken as an average figure.

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In Chinese Turkestan, where corruptness permeated all classes, advancement, like other marketable commodities, was bought and sold. . . . The result was that nothing was done which was not specially paid for, and the people were plundered in order that their rulers might grow rich. Such were the ways in which villages and towns were vampired.[24]

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As an official of the old school, Yang's attitude toward foreign civilization was definitely conservative. Though he was too courteous to show his feelings to foreigners directly, it is known that he disliked them. When a Chinese student attached to the Sino-Swedish Expedition under Sven Hedin asked him why he did not employ foreign engineers to introduce modern techniques into his province, he flew into a rage and said: "Yes, that is just like you students, ready to sell your country to the foreigner."[25]

Yet he was a realist in handling as best he could the international situations with which he was confronted. In 1912, when he was inaugurated as Military Governor, he said in an official statement:

> From the Han and T'ang Dynasties on, whenever China was at peace and powerful the frontier people became obedient; but whenever China was weak and in confusion they revolted. Today the situation has greatly changed. We are being threatened by Outer Mongolia and powerful foreign nations. We shall not be able to come back to Sinkiang if we once lose it.[26]

As soon as he took office as Governor in 1912, Yang Tseng-hsin had to concern himself with problems on the Sinkiang frontier with Outer Mongolia. Then, in 1916, there was a revolt of the Kazakhs in Russian territory, set off by a Tsarist order for la-

[24] Bosshard, *op. cit.*, p. 437.
[25] *Journal of the Central Asian Society*, London, 1929, Vol. 16, pt. 1, p. 89.
[26] *A Survey of Sinkiang*, edited by the Provincial Government, 1938, p. 111 (in Chinese).

own bodyguards, of whom eighteen were serving as waiters, had red bands on their arms and Browning pistols in their sleeves. As soon as the guests sat down to lunch, at three o'clock in the afternoon, Fan's men fired on Yang Tseng-hsin and he fell dead at once. The commander of Yang's bodyguards and some other officials were also murdered, and the foreign guests fled.

Fan Yao-nan went at once to the Governor's office, took the official seals, and sent for Chin Shu-jen, Chief of the Political Department. Instead of going, Chin sent troops headed by the son of the commander of Yang Tseng-hsin's bodyguard, who had just been killed. They seized Fan and killed thirteen of his bodyguard. Fan is said to have been tried at once by a special government committee, and on the next day, July 8, he and a number of his accomplices were executed. Others were executed later. Chin Shu-jen was immediately chosen by the other officials as Commander in Chief and Chairman of the Committee [Governor] of Sinkiang.

Like Yang Tseng-hsin, under whom he had held high office for many years, Chin Shu-jen was a bureaucrat of the old school; but he was not to be compared with Yang in ability and wisdom. On becoming Governor he increased the number of secret service men — presumably out of fear. He entrusted all important posts to his relatives or men from his own native province of Kansu. He promoted one of his bodyguard to be a brigade commander. One of his younger brothers was made military commander at Kashgar; another became the head of the Military Bureau of the province.

Chin's administration was shot through with corruption. Land revenues were collected to almost double the legal amount, and in this process the corruption of the Chinese officials intensified venality among the Uighur Begs. The working of gold at Keriya and of jade in the Khotan district was managed by private contractors, but the output was sold under government monopoly at high prices.[33] The export trade in newborn lambskins was also monopolized. With the backing of military and police power, the

[33] Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsinchiang Chin-Yin Lun*, as already cited, p. 137.

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lambskins were collected at only a tenth of the market value. Monopolies of this kind, through collection at the source of supply by the assertion of official authority, were common in China — especially in the frontier provinces. A Russian observer estimated that in Urumchi only 12 per cent of trade capital belonged to local merchants, 37 per cent to agents of foreign firms, and as much as 51 per cent to Chinese officials.[34]

While Governor Yang had issued paper currency to a total of 10,000,000 taels, Governor Chin increased the inflation by expanding the issue to 145,000,000 taels. Under Yang, the paper currency had a uniform face value of one tael (subject to an exchange differential between regions, as described previously); under Chin, notes were issued in denominations of one, three, five, eight, ten, thirty, and fifty taels. At one time, a tael of silver (about one and one-third ounces) could be bought for two paper taels; by the end of Chin's regime, it took 80 taels in paper to buy a tael of silver.[35]

Both Yang and Chin could be described favorably as "cautious" or unfavorably as "suspicious" in their dealings with foreigners. According to Sven Hedin: "Chin hated foreigners. He took a cynical pleasure in tripping them up, in hindering or frustrating their endeavors. . . . Marshal Yang had decided that a house should be placed at the disposal of the expedition so long as it remained in Sinkiang, arguing that our work was of benefit to the development of the province. For this house Chin demanded an unreasonable rent, which he made retroactive. For that matter, the narrow-minded despot treated everyone with the same meanness."[36] On the other hand, my wife and I, when traveling through Sinkiang in 1927, met with the most cordial treatment from Chin Shu-jen, who was then administrator of Aksu oasis.[37]

The completion in 1930 of the Turksib Railway, passing close

[34] M. Nemchenko, "The Colonial Regime and Agrarian Relations in Sinkiang," as already cited, p. 187.

[35] Chiang Chün-chang, *Hsinchiang Chin-Yin Lun*, p. 136. Chin frequently issued paper notes, the total of which amounted to 145,000,000 taels.

[36] Sven Hedin, *The Flight of "Big Horse,"* New York, 1936, p. 3.

[37] Owen Lattimore, *High Tartary*, Boston, 1930, pp. 304–306.

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Youth Corps were set up at Urumchi, Aksu, and Kashgar. The C.C. Clique member controlling all of these activities was Ch'en Hsi-tseng, who was able to count on co-operation not only within the Provincial Government but on the part of the garrison commander and the police.

Whereas Chang Chih-chung had no strong staff of his own, the C.C. membership penetrated all political ranks. In spite of the unpopularity of the Chinese, it was able to recruit members among all non-Chinese nationalities through its ability to open the way to public office. The Clique has never hesitated to use graft as an auxiliary to party organization, and accordingly in Sinkiang, as elsewhere in China, its party officers and magistrates and military officers affiliated with it have been accused of organized corruption.[82] Organized association with gangs is also widely attributed to the C.C. Clique, especially for the purpose of breaking up elections and popular meetings. Among "incidents" attributed to the C.C. Clique were the murder of a government delegate at Emin, near Chuguchak, in November 1946; a big riot in Urumchi in February 1947, in which five were shot and many wounded; and riots in Turfan, Toksun, and Shanshan during July 1947. The pattern follows that long established by the C.C. Clique in China, down to the detail of having such incidents reported in controlled newspapers in such a way as to imply that the blame for them lay on the Uighurs and other non-Chinese.[83]

With a deteriorating situation in China itself, Chang's policy of moderation and compromise in Sinkiang was bound to appear more and more like a policy of temporizing, and to seem, to the non-Chinese peoples of Sinkiang, more like a reluctant retreat

[82] Detailed accusations in *Observer* (weekly), Shanghai, March 22, 1947 (in Chinese).

[83] See editorial in *Hsinchiang Jih Pao* (*Sinkiang Daily*), Urumchi, July 1, 1947 (in Chinese); also article by Chang Chi-yun (member of the C.C. Clique), in *Ta Kung Pao*, Tientsin edition, September 21, 1947 (in Chinese). The other side is given in a manifesto of Chinese in the Chuguchak district (under control of the Kulja dissidents), denouncing the Chinese riot of February 1947 in Urumchi, published in the Chinese edition of *Ta Cheng Min Sheng Pao* (*Justice and the People's Livelihood*), Chuguchak, April 30, 1947.

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households of *chakars,* from whom he claimed both labor services 312
and rent in kind. 423

When the water finally gets to the field, its allocation to the
cultivator is calculated in terms of the flow for a certain number 312
of hours, according to the width and depth of the canal. Millers 624
have the right only to run water over the wheel, and must then 578
return it to the canal. Such matters, together with the mainte-
nance of registers and the supervision of upkeep, are under the 691
authority of an official called the *mirab,* who is locally elected, 661
which means that in his election the locally influential families 423
usually determine the choice. In addition, Moslem religious offi-
cials have certain traditional rights, especially of adjudication.
Within localities, disputes are most frequent in the spring, when
each cultivator is eager to be the first to get water on his land.
Between localities, the most important disputes are between up-
stream and downstream communities. Disputes have been going
on for twenty-five years between Yarkand, which is big and pow-
erful, and Merket, which is smaller but rich in the cultivation of
cotton. Quarrels can be carried from lower to higher authority.
A dispute between the villages of Punak and Malihalihan, in the
subdistrict of Chira, was carried up to the district administrator
of Khotan, who decreed that for two days each month in Feb-
ruary, April, and June Punak should turn over its flow of water
to Malihalihan. The intervention of higher authority is a tradi-
tional opportunity for the collection of bribes by Chinese officials.

Oases vary greatly in size but closely resemble each other in 361
structure. Every oasis has a village or town, sometimes a walled 443
city at its center. Larger oases may have several such towns. 463
These centers are called "bazaars" and serve as market places for
farm produce. In the larger bazaars there are also artisans such
as blacksmiths, carpenters, coppersmiths, cobblers, and wheel-
wrights. Smaller bazaars, which cannot support many permanent
shops, have their market day on different days of the week and
the merchants and artisans visit them in rotation.

Around the bazaars are the farms, each with its own home- 361
stead. An important function of an oasis bazaar is the distribution 241
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175 779 whilst all were irresistibly attracted to him by an ecstatic devotion of spiritual love." [16]

We have some notes on the theocratic feudalism of the Khojas made by the Portuguese Jesuit Father Bento de Goes, who reached Yarkand, then the capital of the Kashgar kingdom, toward the end of 1603. In February, 1604, he described Yarkand as an emporium on the long overland route between China and Europe. The severity of Moslem rule was such that as soon as the Friday service was over, twelve men left the mosque with scourges to punish those who had not attended the service.

175 779 661 Both trade and mining were administered under the feudal practice of granting privilege and monopoly. The right of organizing and leading a caravan was sold by the "king" to the highest bidder, who then became an "ambassador," with absolute authority over those traveling with the caravan. He recovered a part of his investment by selling positions under his authority to four associates, who also received the title of ambassador; another seventy-two privileged travelers also paid for their places in the caravan.

Similarly, the monopoly for exploiting the famous jade of Khotan was also for sale. "For a high price the king sells the quarrying rights to some merchants, without whose consent no one is allowed to take away any stone as long as the contract lasts." [17]

175 578 It was a little more than a century after their conquest of China that the Manchus invaded Sinkiang in 1755. Their campaign was aimed at the Jungars or "East Wing" of the Western Mongols, called Kalmuks by the Turkish-speaking peoples of Inner Asia and by the Russians. The Jungars at this time had for decades, under a succession of military leaders, been fighting savagely among themselves, had been intermittently exercising overlordship in Tibet and over the oases of the Tarim Basin, and more recently had several times defeated the Northern Mongols or

[16] Ney Elias, in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1897, pp. 6–7.
[17] C. Wessels, *Early Jesuit Travellers in Central Asia, 1603–1721*, The Hague, 1924, pp. 24–25 and 28.

cut off. A magistrate of former days, who was angriy aroused by the unusual number of crimes in his district, had all the suspected criminals rounded up and then, merely as a precaution, ordered the tendons of their ankles slit. A murderer once was allotted a terrible punishment. Stripped naked under a hot sun, he was thrown to the hard earth of a compound yard and fastened there with wooden pegs driven through his body. His torturers then secured a live rat under an inverted pot on his mid-section, and left him to die while the sun's rays beat down upon him and the rat ate through his abdomen. Almost as horrifying is the case of the Moslem who came upon his wife with her face unveiled talking across the compound wall to a male neighbor. The husband immediately drew his sword and cut off her head. Throwing it over the wall, he told the neighbor that he could thenceforth have her for good.

Political corruption, too, in former days was rife. The tax burden on the common man was unbearable, and officialdom squeezed for selfish gain. Tax methods were irregular and, since they usually varied from locality to locality, systematic check was difficult. On paper an official would report that he was maintaining a strong force of military but, actually pocketing the monetary difference out of his budget, would only keep about him a fraction of the number of troops reported. Nepotism was commonly practiced and, even if the ugly truth concerning some particular instance did come to public attention, usually little was done about it. Since Han Chinese officials were a small minority and since the people whom they were governing were strange in language and customs, native headmen often obtained important intermediate posts by which they, too, kept their pockets illicitly lined.

Out of this paradoxically alluring and yet repellent atmosphere came finally the Sinkiang uprising of the 1930's and the emergence of a young, well-educated Manchurian Chinese leader by the name of Sheng Shih-ts'ai.

irrigation projects, more extensive colonization, and a land survey. But most important, Tso recommended that the Western Regions be consolidated into one province, *Hsin-chiang* ("The New Dominion") or Sinkiang. By this he at last crystallized the Sinkiang frontier, on the one hand for China and on the other hand against the empires of the modern Occident. Actually the regional lines—that is to say, China's more rigid northwest national boundary and the framework for the province of Sinkiang—cut across the natural grain of traditional Central Asian life and jarred the nomad, the farmer, and the merchant there. The strategem, with local squabbles within Europe indirectly assisting, did help to counter the threats of imperialism, primarily that of Tsarist Russia.

But for at least three reasons Tso Tsung-t'ang's recommendations did not suffice. First, his major emphasis was upon the old-style Ch'ing military control which could not stand up in the face of the weapons Europe was even then beginning to fabricate. Second, his constructive measures do not seem to have been far-reaching enough in scope or in execution or to have provided suitable means of binding Sinkiang to China Proper through economic ties. Finally, the ebb of Ch'ing power which brought Republican revolt and the fall of the Dynasty in China by 1912 was bound to be felt keenly on the far-flung Sinkiang frontier.

Under the Early Republic

Tu Chung-yüan speaks of administration in Sinkiang during the early years of the Chinese Republic in this manner:

> . . . The Yang [Tseng-hsin]-Chin [Shu-jen] period was lengthy and greedy. The politician did not believe in working but only in officiating; even when he was officiating he aimed only at making money. This arose from the fact that Yang and Chin were basically that type. In general if a person were to come to Sinkiang from the interior it was not asked whether he had qualifications or not, whether he was talented or not. All that was necessary instead was that he be of an "experienced" temperament or perhaps that he had served in an office of a military governor or of a provincial government for eight to ten years so that it could be seen he had been reared in the atmosphere of slavery. . . . Or, again, if he were appointed, say as a county magis-

661 trate or as a tax collector, it was only desired that he collect eighty to one hundred thousand dollars in a year's work. Can one ask that a man's talents be developed in this type of government atmosphere? Since the culture of other peoples of Sinkiang had been submerged so much, the Han official became like a god, and if a magistrate were appointed for a county in South Sinkiang he need not have been especially greedy to receive fifty to sixty thousand from the Moslems on one visit. Therefore all people coming to Sinkiang from the interior had such hopes. But now it is not possible!

The "Clean Government" of the New Sinkiang

In the face of provincial discontent over the old Sinkiang administrative system, Sheng Shih-ts'ai set about in 1933 to institute reforms. It would have been surprising indeed if prevalent and all too customary Chinese foibles—of "squeeze," "rotten gentry," and excessive taxes, for instance—had been completely eradicated under his policy of "Clean Government." Since almost no first-hand data, such as reports from any long-time Occidental resident in the province, are available it may be some time before what may or may not have been accomplished along these lines can be fully known. But so far as Tu Chung-yüan is concerned, the changes have already been praiseworthy. Former abuses concerning salaries, "gifts," and taxes by office-holders in the province have been checked, he says, by a provincial commission which is required to enter accounts in regard to all public moneys in the records of Sheng Shih-ts'ai's own office. Sheng himself has set a leading example in governmental unselfishness, according to Tu, by accepting a monthly salary of less than $100 Chinese for his work. Mrs. Sheng, an administrator of a girls' middle school, is held before the reader's eyes as a model also because she gets a monthly salary of only about $10 Chinese. Such examples, Tu points out, are in sharp contrast with the practices of past administrators.

643 In regard to the type of administration in the New Sinkiang, this much can be also said. The province is governed under a "committee" system similar to that in other provinces of China. Members of a provincial committee are appointed by the Executive Yüan of the Chinese National Government, which also ratifies the appointment of one

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

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the effect on the gaiety, or at any rate noisiness, of the party and on the circulation of the liquor is remarkable.

The manners and customs of the table-servants were a never-failing source of delight to D. and myself. I have mentioned in a former chapter the staid Chinese butler at Yangi Hissar who clapped his master's bowler on top of his own Homburg and stood solemnly wearing the two hats throughout the tea-party. Often at dinner-parties in the open, when we had left the table and were sitting over tea and dessert in another part of the garden, I noticed the waiters going round the table and pouring back into the bottle any champagne or brandy left by the diners in their glasses. After one of our own dinners on the terrace, I happened to go back suddenly to the table to fetch something and found two attendants who had come with Chinese guests similarly occupied—but it was not into my bottles that they were pouring the remains of the drinks. At a certain ladies' dinner-party at Khotan D. was electrified to observe one of the waiters take away a guests' cup, drink off the cold remains of the tea and, without washing it, fill it up from the tea-pot and hand it back to its owner. After that, she said, she took care to drain her cup to the dregs every time!

Harding and I (D. fortunately was not invited) attended during our first week in Kashgar another meal which was very different from the civilized banquet described above. This was a lunch given by General Ma, Titai (G.O.C.) of Kashgaria, one of the worst scoundrels in Central Asia. This person was a Muhammadan of Yunnan province, aged over seventy yet full of vitality, who had held the chief military command south of the Tien Shan for seven or eight years and had taken advantage of his position to enrich and aggrandize himself by the most brutal and oppressive methods. He made everybody call him *Padshah* (king) on pain of death; he had a whole harem full of the prettiest Turki women in Kashgar, and his armed agents roamed the country-side "looking for new cows to milk," as the Titai facetiously put it. The only person in Kashgaria of whom he was afraid was Chu Tao Tai, and after the latter's transfer his extortions quadrupled. He had a pleasant way of trumping up charges against people whom he did not like, or who refused to pay him the blackmail he demanded, and cutting off their fingers or toes, joint by joint, in an immense hay-chopper he had constructed specially for the purpose. In fact, he emulated the exploits of the worst robber-Tuchuns of China Proper, the only difference being

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

661 that his army was mostly on paper and he had no real strength behind him.

574 Ma Titai's headquarters were at the New or Chinese city, six miles east of Old Kashgar, and here he kept up great state. Harding and I looked forward with much interest to seeing this ogre; nor were we disappointed, for there was something distinctly ogre-ish about our experiences. Half an hour's ride from the Consulate brought us within sight of the long massive walls of the Titai's citadel. Here we were met by a troop of well-mounted but untidy and apparently only quarter-disciplined Chinese cavalry, who escorted us in a thick cloud of dust through dirty, tumbledown bazaars thronged by a sinister-looking half-breed populace to a huge mud-brick gateway of the *lasciate ogni speranza* type. Here the smell which rose from the dry moat below nearly knocked us off our horses. Within, more gateways, skew-eyed like the first to keep out the devils (in China the devils can only fly straight, so a gateway with a kink in it defeats them) followed by a long street of shops rather more prosperous-looking than those outside. Here and there we had peeps up side-lanes of fantastically-shaped temples and other buildings, some half-ruined, others grotesquely painted and surmounted by symbolical wooden figures of birds and beasts. 344 At last we came to the Titai's *yamen* or palace and found ourselves in a vast square with a pagoda-roofed gateway in front of us and enormous figures of dragons on either side. Troops of soldiers dashed about presenting arms as they ran and fell hurriedly into line with much shouting of words of command, while the salute-guns banged their welcome and horses shied in all directions. Passing through huge painted doors we were welcomed in an inner courtyard by a short, grizzled, monkey-like old man with a long wispy moustache and fierce eyes, resplendently arrayed in a saxe-blue Chinese Field Marshal's uniform several sizes too large for him, complete with plumed hat, several rows of stars and medals and gold lace epaulettes the size of hassocks flapping from his shoulders. With the gold-encrusted tunic hanging about his wispy old frame like a frock-coat on a scarecrow, and the overalls, as usual in the Sinkiang Army, innocent of braces, he looked a regular Chinese Count Hedzoff of Paphlagonia; but there was a sinister feel behind the *opera-bouffe*—or was it only because we knew about the murders and torturings which went on somewhere behind the grim walls of his citadel?

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

CHAPTER XVI

ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS

WE returned from Keriya towards the end of May to find Kashgar in a ferment of excitement. For some time past I had known that there was trouble brewing for our local ogre, General Ma, "Titai" or Commander-in-Chief of the forces in the south-west of the province, and self-styled King of Kashgar. Since the famous lunch-party of July 1922, described in Chapter VI, the situation had developed. The old bandit, drunk with power and firmly believing that there was no one in all Central Asia strong enough to call him to account, surpassed all his previous records in oppression. He robbed, blackmailed, mutilated, slave-drove and otherwise tyrannized over the unfortunate inhabitants of the New City and district to his heart's content, snapping his fingers at the remonstrances of the Taoyin and other civil officials. Farmers and petty shopkeepers began to leave the country in large numbers nominally on pilgrimage to Mecca, but in reality to escape the tyranny of the "Padshah."

The interesting feature of the Titai's methods of self-enrichment was that they were not confined to those of the traditional Asiatic tyrant. There was a touch of the practical Chinese business man about him, for he did not content himself with merely transferring wealth from other people's pockets to his own; he created it. He claimed all the minerals of the country as the perquisite of the military authorities, and exploited them for his own benefit. His coal and copper-mines, his oil-wells and refinery, his jade-cutting factory and other enterprises, brought him large profits. As a capitalist his position was an enviable one; for he enjoyed a monopoly not only of raw materials, but also of armed force with which to secure cheap labour and push the sale of his products.

It would take too long to describe the various interesting

3: Skrine G-3 (1922-1924) 1926 All Sinkiang All

methods by which the unscrupulous General exploited his command. One illustration will suffice. The chief product of his shale-oil workings at Kanjugan, 30 miles west of Kashgar, was kerosene, which was in great request owing to the failure of the Russian supplies. This he sold at monopoly prices to the public, including ourselves at the Consulate. But for certain by-products of the New City refinery, such as paraffin wax, there was little demand. Accordingly in the winter of 1923–4, the Titai conceived the idea of portioning out the two towns into wards and appointing certain Begs and other trusty henchmen to distribute so much paraffin wax *per mensem* to each shopkeeper, whether he wanted it or not, at a fixed rate. The cobblers, who used wax in their trade, had to take double rations. Very soon complaints began to be heard, which were eventually voiced by the Aqsaqal or headman of the cobblers. He petitioned the Titai to let the cobblers off taking any more of his wax, as they were overstocked, besides which they preferred bees'-wax. The Titai's answer to this petition was to have the man beaten to death, and to fine his widow so heavily that she had to sell the house over her head to pay the fine. As might be expected, the underlings engaged in the distribution of the wax lined their own pockets liberally. They took to compounding with the shopkeepers at so much a head, and the forced sale developed into a regular monthly tax on shopkeepers. The distributors ceased to confine their depredations to the towns of Old and New Kashgar and sent agents all over the districts collecting the wax *gabelle* from petty shopkeepers in the remotest villages.

Apart from his industrial enterprises and his more direct methods of robbery and extortion, the Titai drew large sums from the Kashgar Treasury for the upkeep of the troops with which he was supposed to guard the frontier and garrison the towns. Needless to say, not a tenth of these sums was spent. The nominal strength of the Titai's forces was between 4,000 and 5,000; the actual number maintained may have been about 500. Most of these were quarter-trained, opium-sodden wretches who received neither pay, rations nor equipment, and lived on the country by virtue of the fear inspired by their terrible chief, and the antiquated (and in most cases quite useless) carbines they carried. But the Titai was wrong in thinking that he could eat his cake and have it, for his Gilbertian army proved his downfall.

175 widely distributed and separated from each other by non-Mongol peoples. These Torguts were located in the Tienshan Range above the oasis of Karashahr, on the northern slopes of the Tienshan, and on the southern slopes of the Altai.

The Bato Setkhiltu League was composed of three banners of Khoshuts who lived on the Yulduz plateau in the heart of the central Tien Shan.

The Ching Setkhiltu League, which included three banners of Khoshuts and seven of Urianghai, was located in the Chuguchak-Altai area in northern Sinkiang.

The Chahars in the Borotala Valley, and the Oirat in the valleys of the Tekes and Kash rivers in the Ili region were not included in the leagues.

However, the Chahars and Urianghai are not true Western Mongols. The former were transplanted from Chahar by the Manchus after the conquest of Dzungaria in the eighteenth century; the latter are descendants of tribes who originally lived in what is now Tannu Tuva.

175 159 635 648 Through Yang Tseng-hsin's efforts, Sinkiang remained neutral in the civil war that raged in China in 1926-27. His troops kept out the forces of the "Christian General" Feng Yü-hsiang. On his own initiative, he negotiated a new treaty with the Soviet government permitting Soviet consulates to operate in Sinkiang even after the National Government broke off relations with Soviet Russia in 1927. With the establishment of the National Government at Nanking, Yang wired his acknowledgement of, and allegiance to, the new government, which confirmed his position as governor.

2. Governor Chin Shu-jen

175 159 635 [682] [660] Yang Tseng-hsin came from the southwestern province of Yunnan and during his rule many men from Yunnan had followed him to Sinkiang. In 1928, a fellow Yunnan official, allegedly with the connivance of the Chinese Communists and the Russians, murdered Yang at a banquet in his honor. The military commander Chin Shu-jen, who was believed to be implicated in the assassination plot, immediately suppressed the revolt and put the ringleaders to death. He then maneuvered himself into the position of governor.

Under Chin, the government of Sinkiang virtually disintegrated. Corruption was rife. Chin himself set the example for rapacity. He ruled in open defiance of the National Government at Nanking to the extent of concluding, on his own initiative and without the cognizance of Nanking, a new agreement with Soviet Russia in 1931. [648] The agreement permitted Soviet authorities to establish eight commercial agencies in Sinkiang and to have complete control over telegraph and radio communications, thus increasing Soviet influence in the province.

175 159 635 669 578 The deterioration of economic conditions, heightened by spiralling inflation and the exploitation by Chin's minions, oppression, and inequities, led to widespread discontent. The situation was ripe for

175 a change of the provincial administration came to nothing because
648 of the rapid disintegration and collapse of the National Government
(635) in 1949. The Sinkiang Provincial Government had a formal decla-
[668] ration of adherence to the new Communist regime in Peking in September 1949.

IX. Sinkiang Under the Chinese Communists

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668 After the victory of the Chinese Communists, both Soviet and Chinese policy changed in its attitude toward the Sinkiang Nationalists. While they had been supported and equipped with Soviet arms against the Chinese provincial administration under the National Government, they were now suppressed by the Chinese Communists with Russian help. Soviet troops which were greatly increased and have been estimated as consisting of about 50,000 men during this time were instrumental in defeating the independent forces of Osman Batur who was captured and executed in April 1951 at Urumchi, together with over 13,000 of his followers. The key Nationalist leaders of the Ili area who had been formerly supported by Soviet Russia were eliminated in another way. While on their way to Peking to participate in the opening of the Communist People's Political Consultative Conference, Akmedjan, Isakh Beg, and several other leading figures were killed in an airplane crash on August 29, 1949. The leaders who remained behind, Burkhan and
175 Saifuddin, were willing to work with the Chinese Communists
668 and Soviet Russia along a new line of policy which condemned the
[648] former nationalism and re-interpreted the previous fight in an anti-Kuomintang line. The new leaders were willing to admit former "mistakes: in their nationality policy which had not made a clear distinction between opposition to "rapacious Kuomintang officials, plundering Kuomintang troops, and the oppressive Kuomintang police," and hostility to the "entire Han race." This previous narrow nationalism" was described as harmful and the aim was now to establish full unity between the formerly rebellious districts and the rest of the province. The Ili armed forces were dissolved and integrated into the Chinese Communist Army and a new policy was introduced of ridding the province of its "feudal oppression."

175 This new policy propagandized by both Burkahn and Saifuddin
668 aroused strong nationalist opposition. In 1951, a Kazakh revolt which
669 continued in the Ili area spread towards the east. The movement was attacked by Burhan as representing the "reactionary bourgeois class, such as pan-Turkestanists and pan-Islamists" who were trying to undermine the "solidarity among various races in the People's Republic of China." He stated that "what has been
[661] regarded as progressive at one time may become reactionary at another time," and ordered the liquidation of all "reactionaries,

175 668 669 661 counter-revolutionaries, and pan-Turkestanists" and demanded that the "people of various races" be taught" the spirit of patriotism and internationalism." Simultaneously, a large-scale purge was undertaken to liquidate most of the original revolutionary leaders in the three western districts who had not perished in the airplane crash of 1949. These leaders were replaced by Chinese Communist cadres. The new policy was carried through with great bloodshed. According to a statement by Burkhan in January 1952, over 120,000 "people's enemies" had been liquidated. About 60,000 people attempted to flee from Turkestan, of whom only about 35,000 survived and reached safety in other countries. Large number of people were arrested and used as forced labor among the construction works introduced by the Chinese Communists under Russian guidance. Bollowing this purge, a re-education campaign was carried on by "friendship delegation from Peking, and in the words of the New China News Agency: "It was only after all this that the entire Kazakh people returned to the fold of the fatherland." (See Allen S. Whiting, 'Nationality Tensions in Sinkiang," Far Eastern Survey, January 1956, vol. 25, no. 1.)

175 648 668 669 661 This policy was carried through with the backing of Russian troops as well as the Chinese Communist troops of the First Army Corps which had moved in after 1949. At the time of the Korean war, some of the Chinese troops were withdrawn for Korea, and the Russian forces were reportedly increased from 50,000 to 70,000 men. They were garrisoned along the northern route at each important point.

These Russian troops have thus helped substantially in the suppression of the Turkic nationalism which Soviet Russia had formerly built up and equipped against the Chinese Nationalists. Once before, in 1942, when Soviet Russia partly withdrew from Sinkiang, these nationalists had been left at the merch of the Chinese administration. Many had been arrested and executed, although the Soviet consular officials had continued to intervene on the behalf of some of these nationalist leaders. In 1949, however, the movement was crushed and its very motivation was attacked. Only those leaders survived who were willing to cooperate fully with the new Communist line.

175 648 668 Although the Russians gave full support to the Chinese Communists in their reconquest of Sinkiang, the potential remained for Sino-Soviet rivalry over control in Sinkiang. For the economic development of the province, the Chinese Communists remained dependent on Russian equipment and on Russian technicians. In the Sino-Soviet treaty of February, 1950, the two governments agreed on the establishment in Sinkiang of joint Sino-Soviet stock companies for exploitation of oil and non-ferrous metals in the province. The Soviet control of these companies indicated the political importance of